

NEWS FROM ED MARKEY

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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PILGRIM NUCLEAR SECURITY OVERSEERS FINED FOR SLEEPING AT THE SWITCH, MARKEY SAYS COMPANIES NEED A 'WAKE-UP CALL'

Washington, DC: Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA), a senior Member of the Homeland Security Committee and the House Energy and Commerce Committee, today made the following statement in response to an announcement that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) proposed a \$60,000 civil penalty for Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc., for security violations at the Pilgrim nuclear power plant located in Plymouth, MA.

"It is gratifying that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission decided that being asleep at the nuclear reactor switch is unacceptable, but unfortunately, it is the Commission itself that is asleep at the regulatory switch through its failures to promulgate the necessary security upgrades to ensure that a group of suicidal, well-equipped terrorists can't take advantage of a weak security posture irrespective of whether the reactor personnel are awake or asleep. These companies need more than a slap on the wrist; they need a wake-up call. Nuclear sites like Pilgrim are critical terrorist targets and the public can't afford to have the government napping."

The NRC fine is being issued for a security violation that occurred when a control room supervisor fell asleep while on duty in the control room of the Pilgrim Reactor. The penalties also address the ineffective oversight by the shift manager and reactor operator. Rep. Markey has long believed that the NRC maintains too close a relationship with the nuclear industry and has offered legislation to address existing loopholes in nuclear security.

For more information regarding the Rep. Markey's work in the area of nuclear reactor security, please see www.house.gov/markey.

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